



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

PUBLIC DOCUMENT  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

This mailing was prepared, published  
and mailed at taxpayer expense.

  
M.C.  
PRSRT STD

C O N G R E S S M A N  
**MARIO  
DIAZ-BALART**  
25TH DISTRICT OF FLORIDA



## Your Voice in Washington

### Dear Neighbor,

Now that our troops are beginning to come home after our great success in Iraq, I wanted to share with you some of the important domestic issues that we will be addressing in the 108th Congress.

I have been selected to serve on the House Budget Committee and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The Budget Committee is responsible for developing the spending and revenue levels for the entire federal budget. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is dedicated to solving the problems facing our country's vast transportation infrastructure system. I am honored to have the privilege to serve on these committees of such great importance, not only to our country, but to the citizens of the 25th District of Florida. I look forward to working with my colleagues to find solutions to the many issues facing our nation.

I, along with 215 of my colleagues in the House, successfully passed the House Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2004, including President Bush's economic growth plan. Currently, this plan:

- creates millions of jobs for Americans, including a quarter million jobs in Florida over the next four years;
- eliminates the marriage tax penalty;
- eliminates the death tax;
- eliminates the double taxation of dividends;
- balances the budget in nine years.

Recently, House Speaker Dennis Hastert appointed me to be on the *Prescription Drug Action Team*. The Speaker's announcement came just hours after lawmakers passed a federal budget that provides \$400 billion to modernize Medicare and include a prescription drug benefit. The Prescription Drug Action Team will:

- deliver a Medicare-prescription drug plan for senior citizens;
- modernize Medicare and particularly help those seniors most in need;
- bring a commitment to lowering health care costs including key pharmaceutical medicines.

Please feel free to contact my office if I may be of assistance or if there is any matter you would like to bring to my attention. I look forward to hearing from you.

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart



### Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart has cosponsored the following legislation for the 108th Congress:



#### Armed Forces

- Armed Forces Tax Fairness and Justice Act of 2003 (HR 1393) – Ensures that the tax-exempt status and other benefits afforded under Operation Enduring Freedom are also provided to the United States Armed Forces personnel in Israel.

#### Budget

- Balanced Budget Amendment, HJRes 22 – Amends the U.S. Constitution to ensure that the total outlay for any fiscal year does not exceed the total receipts.

#### Child Protection

- Child Abduction Prevention Act (HR 1104) – Provides judges with the discretion to extend the term for supervision of released sex offenders up to a maximum of life, eliminates the statute of limitations for child abductions and sex crimes and denies pretrial release for child rapists. Additionally, it creates a national Amber Alert Coordinator.

#### Environment

- Clean Water Infrastructure Financing Act (HR 20) – Authorizes appropriations for state water pollution control revolving funds.

#### Education

- HR 442 – Extends the Hope Scholarship tax credit to fees, books, supplies and equipment.
- Family Education Freedom Act (HR 612) - Provides parents with a tax credit of up to \$3,000 for expenses incurred in providing their children with an elementary or secondary education.

#### Foreign Affairs

- H. Con. Res. 27 – Condemns the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. This bill passed the House on February 11, 2003 (Roll Call Vote 20).

- H.Res 179– Calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners in Cuba and expresses support for basic human rights and free elections in Cuba.

#### Healthcare

- Fair Care for the Uninsured Act (HR 583) – Provides a tax-credit to help Americans purchase health insurance. It provides \$1,000 per individual, \$500 per child and a cap of \$3,000 per family, per year in tax credits.
- Securing Access, Value and Equity in Health Care Act (HR 1236) - Provides a \$3,000 health care insurance tax credit for uninsured families.

#### Housing

- Homeowners Insurance Availability Act (HR 1552) – Establishes a program to provide reinsurance to improve the availability of homeowners' insurance.

#### Veterans

- Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2003 (HR 303) – Allows retired military service members with service-connected disabilities to receive military retired pay and veterans' disability compensation.
- Military Survivor Benefits Improvement Act of 2003 (HR 548) – Increases the minimum Survivor Benefit Plan basic annuity for surviving spouses age 62 and older.

#### Workforce and Unemployment

- Back to Work Incentive Act (HR 444) – Provides unemployed individuals in the most need of help with a re-employment account of \$3,000. These back to work accounts will allow unemployed workers to purchase training, supportive services (child care) and counseling.

This Progress Report of the 108th Congress, paid for by the office of Congressman Diaz-Balart, was written to inform you, the taxpayers of the 25th District, about important issues before Congress. As your Representative, Mario Diaz-Balart believes it is important for you – his "employers" – to have this information and to know about the work he is doing.

**Miami-Dade County**  
12851 Southwest 42nd Street  
Suite 131 (Second Floor)  
Miami, Florida 33175  
phone: 305-225-6866  
fax: 305-225-7432

**Collier County**  
4715 Golden Gate Parkway  
Suite One  
Naples, FL 34116  
phone: 239-348-1620  
fax: 239-348-3569

**Washington DC**  
313 Cannon Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515  
phone: 202-225-2778  
fax: 202-226-0346

Office hours will be  
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday.

### Inside This Edition

**Tax Relief**

**Social Security  
Protection**

**Affordable Housing**

# Job Creation and Elimination of Double Taxation

The elimination of the double tax on dividends, which I strongly support, is designed to help create jobs now. Eliminating the double taxation of dividends would:

- Put money in people's pockets – more than \$20 billion in the first year;
- Encourage businesses to invest in America, putting Americans back to work;
- Give the stock market a lift, increasing household wealth and raising the confidence of investors;

Ending the double taxation of dividends would benefit all Americans. It leaves more money in the hands of individuals to spend, save and invest. It helps create more jobs, raises wages for American workers, and provides a much-needed boost for the stock market. It would also help improve investor confidence in the wake of corporate scandals.

## Eliminating the Marriage Tax Penalty

The Budget Resolution that passed would accelerate the marriage tax penalty relief beginning this year by raising the standard deduction for married couples to twice that of the standard deduction for a single filer. Typically, the marriage penalty taxes the income of a family's second wage earner at a much higher rate than if the salary were taxed only as an individual. Forty-six million couples would receive an average tax cut of \$1,716.

## Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart has cosponsored the following tax relief measures:

- Death Tax Permanency Act of 2003 (HR 57) – Makes the repeal of the estate tax permanent.
- Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act (HR 1057) – Makes the doubling of the adoption tax credit permanent.
- Investor Protection, Market Stabilization, and Tax Fairness Restoration Act of 2002 (HR 50) – Repeals the double tax on dividends.
- Marriage Tax Elimination Act (HR 759) – Makes the marriage tax relief permanent and effective this year.
- Sales Tax Equity Act of 2003 (HR 720) – Allows taxpayers to itemize their deductions to deduct either their state and local income tax or state and local sales taxes, providing fairness for Florida taxpayers.
- The Individual and Small Business Tax Simplification Act (HR 22) – Simplifies the filing process for individuals and small businesses.

### Dade County Outreach

City of Homestead  
Homestead City Hall  
790 North Homestead Blvd.  
Homestead, FL 33030

3rd Wednesday of Every Month  
10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

City of Miami Lakes  
Miami Lakes Community Center  
15151 Montrose Road  
Miami Lakes, FL 33016-6430  
1st Thursday of Every Month  
2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

### Collier County Outreach

Immokalee  
Farm Workers' Village  
1800 Farm Worker Way  
Immokalee, FL 34142

2nd Wednesday of Every Month  
10:00 A.M. - Noon  
1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Collier County Library, Immokalee  
Branch  
417 North First Street  
Immokalee, FL 34142  
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

Everglades City  
Everglades City, City Hall  
207 Broadway  
Immokalee, FL 34139  
1st Tuesday of Every Month  
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

**Please stop by if we  
can be of assistance!**

# Social Security Protection Act of 2003 – H.R. 743

Despite the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) efforts, certain Social Security and SSI program activities continue to be subject to fraud and abuse. The Social Security Protection Act, which I cosponsored, gives the SSA the enhanced tools it needs to fight activities that drain program resources and undermine the financial security of beneficiaries by:

- Authorizing the re-issuance of certain misused benefits;
- Adding mechanisms to collect misused benefits and hold representative payees responsible for their actions; and
- Requiring enhanced oversight of representative payees and increasing penalties for benefit misuse.

## Protects Social Security Programs and Individuals by:

- Denying Social Security benefits to fugitive felons and parole violators;
- Expanding the Agency's ability to stop perpetrators of fraud through new civil monetary penalties;
- Preventing persons from misrepresenting themselves as they provide Social Security-related services; and
- Protecting Social Security employees from harm while conducting their duties.

## Helps Individuals with Disabilities Gain Access to Representation:

- Enables them to better navigate a complex application process for benefits, by expanding and improving the SSA's fee withholding process.



Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart met with several instructors from Miami-Dade Community College to discuss what Congress is doing to help with higher education needs in Florida.

# American Dream Down Payment Initiative

I believe in the great value of homeownership for families and communities and I am committed to make the American Dream come true for more families. That is why I have cosponsored the American Dream Down Payment Initiative that will open the door of homeownership to 40,000 more low-income and minority families by helping to offset the up front costs of buying a home.

The Blueprint for the American Dream Partnership is a coalition involving every segment of the housing industry, HUD and its partners to:

- Educate more people in the home buying process;
- Increase the supply of affordable homes;
- Provide more down payment and closing cost assistance; and,
- Offer more home financing options for lower income Americans.



Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart presented the United States flag flown in their honor to Brad Mai, Commander of the USS McFaul.

The American Dream Down Payment Act will enable thousands of Americans to achieve home ownership, a goal at the crux of the American Dream. The effects of this legislation will positively encourage Americans to invest more in their homes and neighborhoods, creating stronger communities in our country.